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LORD CURZON'S SERVICES TO INDIA.

BY ANGLO-INDIAN.

THE Viceroy of India is responsible for the welfare of nearly 295,000,000 of mankind. Of these, 231,000,000 live in the British Provinces; the rest are subjects of the Feudatory States. The British Provinces are under the immediate control of Governors, Lieutenant-Governors and Chief Commissioners; but each Province is subordinate to the Government of India. To assist the Viceroy in his gigantic task, there are five members of the Council of India. One presides over the departments known as the Home Department and the Department of Revenue and Agriculture. Another holds the portfolio of Finance and Commerce. The third controls the Military Department and transacts all business connected with the Administration of the Army. The fourth watches over the Public Works Department and is concerned with Railways, Irrigation, Roads, Buildings and Telegraphs; and the fifth, commonly known as the Legal Member, devotes himself to Legislation and to the business of the various Legislative Councils. All cases of importance are submitted by the various departments to the Viceroy, and for good and for evil he is held responsible. But for external politics, for relations with frontier tribes, and for relations with the Native States and Feudatories within India, involving the well-being of over 63,000,000 of Indians, there is no Member of Council, and the Viceroy himself directs and controls what is known as the Foreign Department of the Government of India.

Now, there are two methods of discharging the duties of the Viceroyalty of India. The first is the easier, the more prudent, and perhaps the more common; and it consists in allowing each department to do its own work, while the Viceroy confines himself to his special business of Foreign Minister. This prudent

method affects circles beyond the headquarters of the Government of India; and the distant Governors of Bombay and Madras, the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma, and the three satraps of Bengal, of Agra and Oudh, and of the Punjab, applaud with a sigh of relief the wise discretion of their nominal chief in this safe and almost constitutional choice. But the 295,000,000 of mankind in India are not reasonable people. They, too, have their traditions; and the chief of their traditions is a belief in a personal ruler, and a deep-rooted hatred and contempt for impersonal government. Nothing is more striking and pathetic than the attachment of the Indians to the memory of the great Queen Mother, and their reverence and love for her Emperor son. But they require in the Emperor's representative a living visible man, coming down to them from the clouds of the Himalayas, and emerging from his closely guarded palace in Calcutta, to be seen, to be heard, and to be known—a man and not a system.

Thus it was in the great days of the Moguls; so it is to-day in the Native States. There, to the people, the State is the Raja; and to-day in British India, after just four years of intense activity and almost superhuman strain, Lord Curzon is the Government, and the living representative of the King-Emperor.

It will be of interest to examine the steps by which Lord Curzon has won this wonderful and almost unique ascendancy over the people of India. He came out to the great Dependency only four years ago, a young man practically untrained in real administration. True, he brought with him a valuable knowledge of the countries which lie on the long marches of the Indian frontier; but, to quote only two instances, he knew nothing of the problems of the land-revenue system of India, nor of the complex questions of the Native States. The older bureaucrats smiled when they heard of the appointment of a young Viceroy: "he would be enfiladed with files in three months," and would tread smoothly the primrose path of urbane officialdom. But they were mistaken. By dint of extraordinary industry, by painful study of the piles of papers which were flung at him, and by mastering the facts of each case, this resolute Viceroy soon showed the wise men of Simla that he could buffet bravely through the choppy waves of the red-tape rapids. And then, as he paused, he began to examine, and even to criticize. It is said that he had the temerity to suggest that the departmental system was too

departmental, and he likened the protagonists to men who played tennis or ping-pong, playing the game and keeping up the rally, but oblivious of the human interests which depended on a speedy decision and delivery. These and other heresies did he utter, and Simla frowned. And the frown grew deeper as reform followed reform. There was reform in office routine which the experienced official stoutly declared would lead to an increase in work. Strange to say, experience was wrong, and to-day the clerks and under-secretaries are grateful for the relief. Next, it struck this busy, ubiquitous Viceroy that it was good that the District Officer, or Préfet, should be allowed to stay in his District sufficiently long to allow of a nodding acquaintance with the people over whom he ruled. There were difficulties, but Lord Curzon overcame them. He had too few English Préfets to go round, and he meant to make the most of them. In two years a good English officer begins to know his people, in his third year he is a power.

In the summer, when the heat in the plains is too intense for hard continuous work, the Viceroy and his Government seek the cool air of Simla, perched high up in the Himalayas; and with the annual growls of the men in the plains against the costly exodus to the Hills, Lord Curzon somewhat reluctantly sought his mountain home. He said something about Simla being his workshop, and the hill pheasants, as the official *habitués* of the Himalayan capital are called, smiled. But it was true, as those knew who saw the lonely light in the Castle room where the Viceroy sat working, while the pleasure-loving Capuans were whirling home long after midnight from their revels.

There was famine in the land—one famine following another. What must this restless Viceroy do but post off from pleasant Simla to the heat of the plains and to the cholera-stricken famine camps. As he reached the first camp down came the rain, and the superstitious Indians drew their own conclusions.

Having seen and sympathized with the patient, long-suffering famine folk, he must needs visit all the plague camps, and he quickly formed the opinion that the well-meant efforts to stay the pestilence were useless, and that the less we interfered with the people the better.

It was all so novel and so undepartmental. Simla frowned and shrugged shoulders, and said it would not last. But it has lasted ;

and now, at the beginning of his fifth and last lap, here is this Viceroy running as pluckily and as freshly as when he started.

But while the older bureaucrats in the Hills were raising their hands in deprecation, the men in the plains and the men at the ports clearly recognized the genius, industry, and grit of this unusual man.

It is known to those who have studied Indian affairs and know the people of India that the year 1899 opened under the most unpromising omens. There had been famine and plague, sinister conflicts between Hindus and Mussulmans which the wise read as a veiled revolution against Government; there had been costly and detrimental wars on the Northwest frontier. Officials were worn out, worked to death, and often despairing. The tragic assassinations in Poona set men brooding, and when in 1899 famine again stalked through the land and plague made another spring, a man of triple courage and energy was wanted and was found. The omens were bad, and the bazars were talking bad talk, and to the ordinary man it would have seemed folly to deplete the British garrison in India. But the call came, and Natal was saved by the prompt arrival of British troops from India. Lord Curzon trusted the people, and they nobly deserved his great and simple trust. But he only gave what he had earned. He earned their trust when he won their sympathy. It is the little things that count, even in big India. One of his peculiarities was his love of going personally into positions presented by all sorts and conditions of people. A dismissed servant of Government will always appeal to the Viceroy for mercy. In ninety cases out of a hundred, his dismissal is right; but the Viceroy has a kind of genius for detecting the ten cases where mercy might be shown. His zeal was troublesome to the overworked departments, and there were many wise and loyal friends who urged him not to overtax his powers and to let such small things be. But he would not. And so it went through India that the great Lord Sahib looked into all things, and that the old Mogul system was revived and the hall of public audience reopened.

It is very hard for those who have never seen the horrors of famine and plague in India to realize what it means to the people. These gentle, home-loving people, suddenly hurled from easy, happy prosperity into sordid, starving want, work patiently at their tasks in the famine camp. And in the plague camp there

is the same despair at the loss of the home and the disruption of the family. In spite of efforts and self-sacrifice, often ending in death on the part of the English famine and plague officers, there were suffering and misery, and these breed discontent. Then the troops depart to South Africa; and, later, the garrison is more seriously weakened by the despatch of an army to China. Anxiety increases; and, just as the sky is brightening, there comes the news to India that the good Queen is dead. "Let Government look to itself," say the prophets and the pundits; "it was love and reverence for the Queen that kept us quiet in our misery." Like a beaver, the quick Viceroy is repairing the dam before the water has begun to ooze. He is occupying the minds of nearly 300,000,000 human beings with memories of that wise and loving Queen Mother, and he has pointed their eyes to a Memorial which will one day rise as witness of India's love. And no sooner have the hundreds of thousands who mournfully paraded the great plain of Calcutta to testify to their sorrow melted away, than the Viceroy sits down to think how quickly and how thoroughly he may show to India that the King Emperor is but a re-incarnation of the lost Queen Empress. The busy brain was at work, and the far-seeing eye looks over a space of two years to a splendid pageant at Delhi, when all India shall know and rejoice in the pomp of the coming of the new King Emperor.

It would be wearisome to recount the reforms which Lord Curzon, in his almost boyish energy, has taken in hand. His twelve reforms were the subject of much speculation; for the most part, they have passed into the region of realization, but if one studies the Gazettes and published State Papers of India, from January, 1899, to January, 1903, one might multiply the twelve by ten, and even then the list of the Curzon reforms would not be exhausted. Not the reforms of a faddist or a dreamy student, but simple practical reforms such as a good man of business in America or England would introduce, if his well-being depended on the business. This Viceroy sees the points of the game and never loses sight of them. What the points are can be learned by a very casual reading of Lord Curzon's speeches.

He lands in Bombay on a sunny December morning in 1898, and is most kindly greeted by the citizens of that most beautiful city. He comes at once to his point. He believes that:

"loyalty, of which you speak, to the person and the throne of the Queen

Empress to be as widespread as it is profound and sincere. In my eyes it is, more than any other factor, the bond which holds together in harmonious union the diverse races and creeds of this country, and which secures to them the blessings of internal peace and tranquillity; and, during my stay in India, I shall spare no effort, so far as in me lies, to fortify, to diffuse, and to encourage that feeling."

But it was to be no lip-loyalty, but real loyalty, that he demanded and secured. In the same speech he said that "to hold the scales even" would be a good motto for a Viceroy.

"For with what a mosaic of nationalities and interests he is confronted; with his own countrymen, few in number, and scattered far and wide under a trying climate in a foreign land, and with the manifold races and beliefs, so composite and yet so divergent, of the indigenous population, in its swarming and ever-multiplying millions. To hold the scales even under such conditions is a task that calls indeed for supple fingers and for nerves of steel."

The British garrison in India is, on the whole, a marvel of good conduct and patience, when we consider the awful climate and the dreariness of the soldier's life. Maddened by the heat of the stifling night, the soldier raises his fist against the Indian who should be pulling the punkah, or, ignorant of the language, and still more ignorant of the customs and prejudices of the "Moors," he does something which brings the people of the village buzzing around him like hornets. Then Thomas Atkins lashes out, and too often a life is taken. New rules were made, and strict orders issued and enforced to prevent these lamentable collisions between the soldiers and the Indians. It was a subject of sufficient importance to call for mention at the Budget Debate, and Lord Curzon said:

"Our one desire is to draw closer the bonds of friendly feeling that should unite the two races whom Providence has placed side by side in this country; and I venture to assert that no higher motive could inspire any body of men who are charged with the terribly responsible task of Indian administration."

Quite admirable, but we admire more the practical and prophylactic Proconsul who, talking at an Army Temperance Meeting, says:

"There is no subject in which I have taken greater interest, since I have been in India, than in that of the improved ventilation and lighting of barracks. . . . I look forward to the time, and am doing my best to hurry it on, when every barrack in India shall be lighted by elec-

tricity, and when the punkahs shall be pulled by the same motive power; and I believe that if this scheme were to cost half a crore of rupees or more, it would be money well laid out in the improved health and contentment of the men, and in the diminution of one of the most frequent causes of collision between soldiers and natives."

Lord Curzon has indeed hurried it on, and in years to come the English soldier will live to bless the Viceroy who gave him cool nights and unbroken sleep. It would have been so much easier to leave the racial question alone. But this strange strong man, who had pledged himself to "hold the scales even," declared that so far as in him lay he would bring to justice the white man who wantonly injured his Indian fellow-subject. He holds that every Englishman, official or non-official, is his colleague in the East. The white man is scarce and precious, and his example and conduct are the determining factors in the success and strength of the administration of India. The policy is admirably stated in the following words, instinct with the spirit of the Good Queen proclamation. Addressing the soldiers at a crowded meeting of the Army Temperance League, the Viceroy said:

"What, I would ask, are we all here for—every one of us, from the Viceroy at the head of the official hierarchy to the latest joined British private in barracks? We are not here to draw our pay, and do nothing, and have a good time. We are not here merely to wave the British flag. We are here because Providence has, before all the world, laid a solemn duty upon our shoulders; and that duty is to hold this country by justice, and righteousness, and good will, and to set an example to its people. You may say why should we set an example, and what example have we to set? Well, I dare say we have much to learn as well as to teach. It would be arrogant to pretend the contrary. I feel myself that never a day of my life passes in India in which I do not absorb more than I can possibly give out. But we have come here with a civilization, an education, and a morality which we are vain enough, without disparagement to others, to think the best that have ever been seen; and we have been placed, by the Power that ordains all, in the seats of the mighty, with the fortunes and the future of this great continent in our hands. There never was such a responsibility. In the whole world there is no such duty. That is why it behooves every one of us, great or small, who belongs to the British race in this country, to set an example. The man who sets a bad example is untrue to his own country. The man who sets a good one is doing his duty by this. But how can the drunkard set an example, and what is the example that he sets? And what sort of example, too, is set by the officer who winks at drunkenness instead of treading it under foot? It is no answer to me to say that the native

sometimes gets intoxicated in his way, just as the British soldier does in his. One man's sin is not another man's excuse. Where are our boasted civilization and our superior ethics if we cannot see that what is degrading in him is more degrading in us? If we are to measure our own responsibility by that of the millions whom we rule, what becomes of our right to rule and our mission? It is, therefore, officers and soldiers, not on mere grounds of abstract virtue, nor for the sake of the discipline and the reputation of the Army, nor even for your own individual good alone, that I have stood here this afternoon to plead the cause of temperance in the ranks; but because the British name in India is in your hands just as much as it is in mine, and because it rests with you, before God and your fellowmen, to preserve it from sully or reproach."

There is a sin which easily besets the great Proconsuls of India, the alcohol of popularity. In that beautiful land of pageants, of antique politeness, and *dolce far niente* customs, there is a great temptation to be all things to all men, and to avoid plain speaking. But if we are to judge from a study of the English and Vernacular Press of India, Lord Curzon has lost nothing by his plain direct utterances. The native organs grind out the same old tunes, doleful tunes of excessive expenditure on the army, of over-taxation, and of a fine continent being drained of its life-blood by British vampires. Over the drone of the organ-grinders rises the clarion note:

"There are two great duties of Imperial statesmanship in India. The first is to make all these millions of people if possible happier, more contented, more prosperous. The second is to keep them and their property safe. We are not going for the sake of the one duty to neglect the other."

Again:

"I am not in the least disturbed by the argument that all this military expenditure is a waste, and that the money had much better be spent on projects of economic development. I would gladly spend the whole of our revenues in the latter way, but I say frankly that I dare not. The army is required to make India safe."

To make India safe—that is his great preoccupation. When he first came out as Viceroy, the military party pictured an ambitious man who would make India, if not safe, at any rate bigger. The ardent spirits on the frontiers, and the priests of the forward policy, saw the millennium and burnished their weapons. But there was bitter disappointment. No advance of the frontier

posts, but if anything the reverse. The regular troops are withdrawn for a bigger and more effective duty, and wild tribesmen are enrolled as Frontier Militia. Wild-cat schemes of fortifications in *cul-de-sacs* are contemptuously countermanded, and though money is forthcoming for military expenditure, every penny is counted and efficiency is insisted on.

The subject of taxation would require a separate article for its exposition. Suffice it to say that the revenues of India depend chiefly on land taxation, and that the happiness and prosperity of the country depend on that taxation being moderate and evenly distributed. Land taxation is a special study, and few save the specialists who have spent their lives in the villages dare mention the subject. And they as a rule obscure it by technical phrases which baffle the layman. It came somewhat as a surprise to officials and to the public generally when the indomitable Viceroy sat down to study the subject and then issued to the world a classic on Land Revenue—"no mere departmental defence of our methods and objects, but a serious and conscientious examination of the subjects of assessments in relation to the various parts of India."

In all his utterances on the hundreds of subjects which must be confronted in the five years, one recognizes the broad unmistakable lines of policy which guide him in his difficult orbit. In a notable speech at the Convocation of the Calcutta University from which we have gleaned, there is the old note of "holding the scales even."

"Do not imagine for one moment that there is any desire on the part of the English governors of this country to keep native character and native ability in the background. I assert emphatically, after more than three years' experience of Indian administration, that wherever it is forthcoming, it receives unhesitating encouragement and prompt reward. An Indian who not only possesses the requisite attainments, but who has energy, a strong sense of duty, and who runs straight, must come to the front. He is indispensable to us in our administration. . . . When an Englishman says that he is proud of India, it is not of battlefields and sieges, nor of exploits in the Council Chamber or at the desk that he is principally thinking. He sees the rising standards of intelligence, of moral conduct, of comfort and prosperity, among the native peoples, and he rejoices in their advancement. Similarly, when an Indian says that he is proud of India, it would be absurd for him to banish from his mind all that has been, and is being, done for the resuscitation of his country by the alien race to whom have been committed its destinies.

Both are tillers in the same field, and both are concerned in the harvest. From their joint labors it is that this new and composite patriotism is springing into life. It is Asian, for its roots are embedded in the traditions and the aspirations of an Eastern people; and it is European, because it is aglow with the illumination of the West. In it are summed up all the best hopes for the future of this country, both for your race and for mine. We are ordained to walk here in the same track together for many a long day to come. You cannot do without us. We should be impotent without you. Let the Englishman and the Indian accept the consecration of a union that is so mysterious as to have in it something of the divine, and let our common ideal be a united country and a happier people."

The Indians are shrewd observers of character, and often sum up in a nickname qualities and tendencies which we strive to express at blundering length. The nickname is rarely known till the great man has left India, but we have often heard the abjective "*Pucka*" coupled with the name of Lord Curzon. The Indians, who are the reverse of "*Pucka*," admire the man who is thorough, and while gently acquiescing in inefficiency, respect the ruler who insists on efficiency. They like him, too, for his almost splendid display and personal expenditure, and it is rumored in the bazars that the Viceroy, like the unfortunate British subaltern, does not see much of his pay.

But, above all things, they like him for his attitude towards the Native Chiefs. It is a striking fact, the feeling of British India for Feudatory India. Publicists scout the idea of an Indian nationality, and they are probably right; but there can be no doubt that the people of India see in the Rajas and their Raj, in the Chiefs and their Kingdoms, the old India which they believe existed before the Iron Age came in. It is a remarkable sight to see one of these Chiefs in his own country, the object of loving adoration and respect: still more remarkable to see the veneration and applause with which they are received in British India. It all comes back to the prime principle that Orientals believe in and require personal rule. It is curious to notice the attitude of the native press towards the Chiefs. If an English official is caught tripping, if a native in British India stumbles, the native press thunders its denunciations throughout the country. But the native press is tender to the faults of a native state. It is too sacred, it is national, a last survival of the Golden Age of India.

There is, perhaps, nothing in the whole British Empire more

fascinating than the close study of the Feudatory States of India, but too often their quaintness and romance have been allowed to obscure their importance and responsibilities. Too often the King's representative has treated them with pleasant blandishment; and, as each successive Viceroy passes away amid pageants such as no other country can give, and after hospitality which would eclipse the traditions of the City of London, the thoughtful onlooker, might have said, as he looked at the courteous, kindly Raja bidding adieu to the guest—" *Te morituri salutant.*"

For India is growing up, and much as she loves her Raja, education is whispering strange and dreadful truths about progress and about duty; and as the express train shrieks through the Native State on its way to the ports and the ships, men look out of the window and utter the word "anachronism." And if Native States had been allowed to glide easily down the gradient, it is certain that as an institution they were doomed.

There could be no doubt that the Viceroy in his attitude towards Native States was their consistent and courteous champion. This the Rajas and the people of British India fully recognized. They saw that he was an admirer of the institution and was thinking hard how to perpetuate it. Unhappily for the institution certain Chiefs, happily few in number, have sought in foreign travel and in Western distractions escape from the *ennui* of the environment of the country whence they draw their income and their dignity. Apart from duty there is a grave political danger in this, and the Viceroy issued a letter couched in very plain terms in which he deprecated too frequent absence of Chiefs from their territories and their subjects. But the chief point of his policy is to do away with the *ennui* of the Chief's life and to point him to higher things. It is well expressed in a speech which he made at Gwalior. After explaining the position of the Feudatory States guaranteed against external ills by the Suzerain Power, he said:

"But I also do not hesitate to say, wherever I go, that a return is owing for these advantages, and that security cannot be repaid by license, or the guarantee of rights by the unchartered exercise of wrong. The Native Chief has become, by our policy, an integral factor in the Imperial organization of India. He is concerned not less than the Viceroy or the Lieutenant-Governor in the administration of the country. I claim him as my *colleague* and partner. He cannot remain *vis à vis* of the Empire a loyal subject of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress, and *vis à vis* of his

own people a frivolous or irresponsible despot. He must justify and not abuse the authority committed to him; he must be the servant as well as the master of his people. He must learn that his revenues are not secured to him for his own selfish gratification, but for the good of his subjects; that his internal administration is only exempt from correction in proportion as it is honest; and that his *gadi* is not intended to be a divan of indulgence, but the stern seat of duty. His figure should not merely be known on the polo-ground, or on the race-course, or in the European hotel. These may be his relaxations, and I do not say that they are not legitimate relaxations; but his real work, his princely duty, lies among his own people. By this standard shall I, at any rate, judge him. By this test will he in the long run, as a political institution, perish or survive."

That one word "colleague" was quite enough. No longer a mere holiday show, but a ruler with enormous powers and responsibilities, working along under Providence to the same end as the great "Lord Sahib."

The Imperial Cadet Corps was instituted, by which a career in the army is opened to the sons of the Chiefs and Nobles of India, and above all a searching enquiry was made into the special Colleges of the Chiefs, and various reforms for improving the education and discipline of these institutions are to be introduced. All this would have been impossible had it been attempted in an impersonal manner. But in his short four years Lord Curzon has visited every Chief of India in his own home, and each one of them has heard from the Viceroy's own lips what he is trying to do for him and his descendants. They know he is their champion, and they hail with delight the frequent utterance that they and their sons should "still remain Indians, true to their own beliefs, their own traditions, and their own people."

And now we in the far West must bid adieu to the simple strong man as he fronts the sun in the far East. He is "a believer in taking the public into the confidence of Government. The more they know, the more we may rely upon their support." He has reason for his reliance if we read aright the published papers of the last four years of British rule in India.

ANGLO-INDIAN.